

# Saga™

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

CHAPTER  
FIFTEEN



FS'13



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CHAPTER  
FIFTEEN

# Saga

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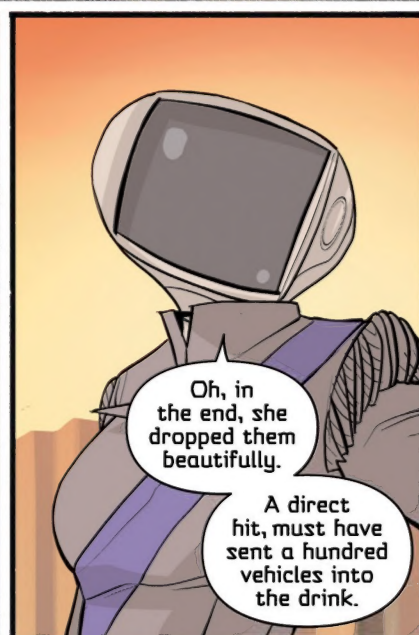
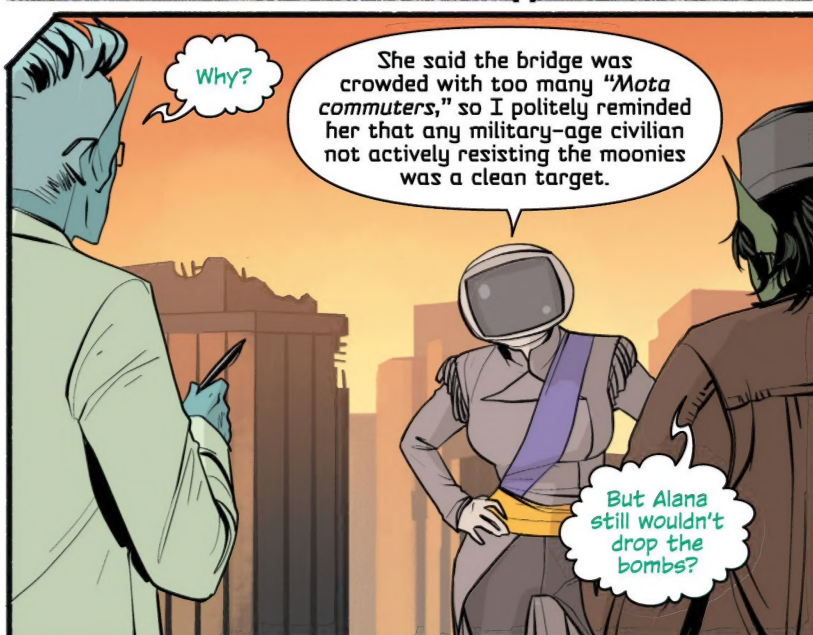
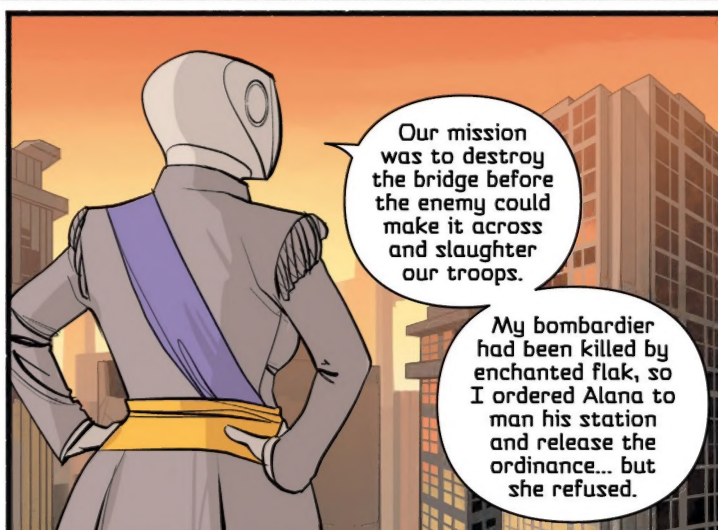


Would one of you overgrown condom failures kindly remove the dead fucking dragon from my runway?

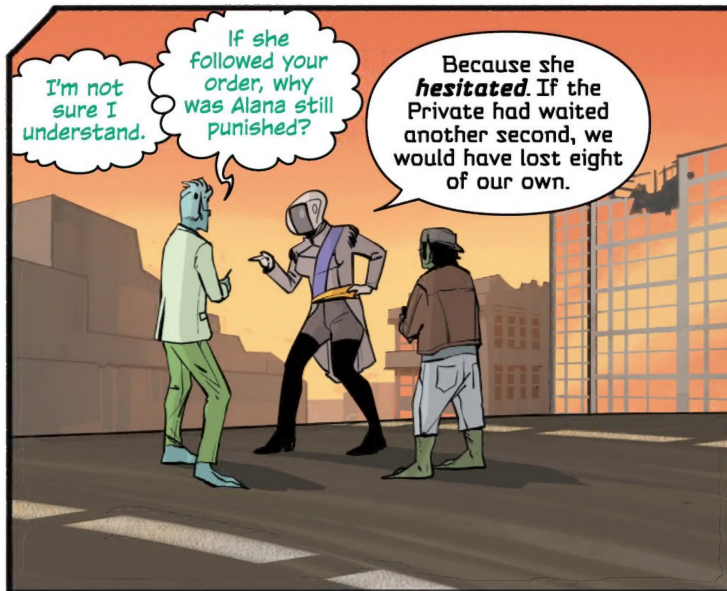












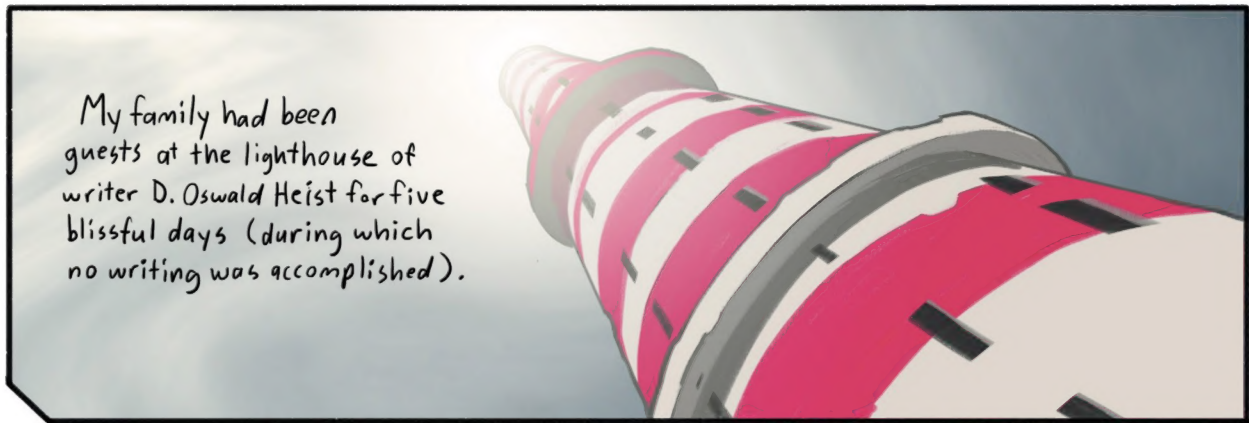




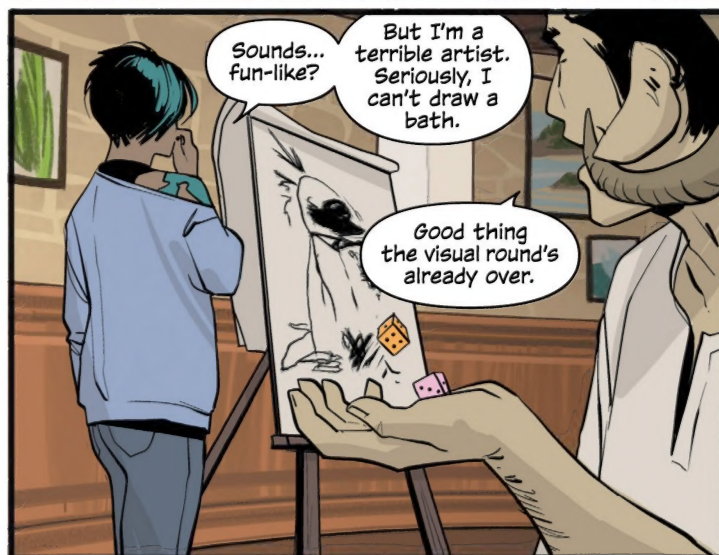
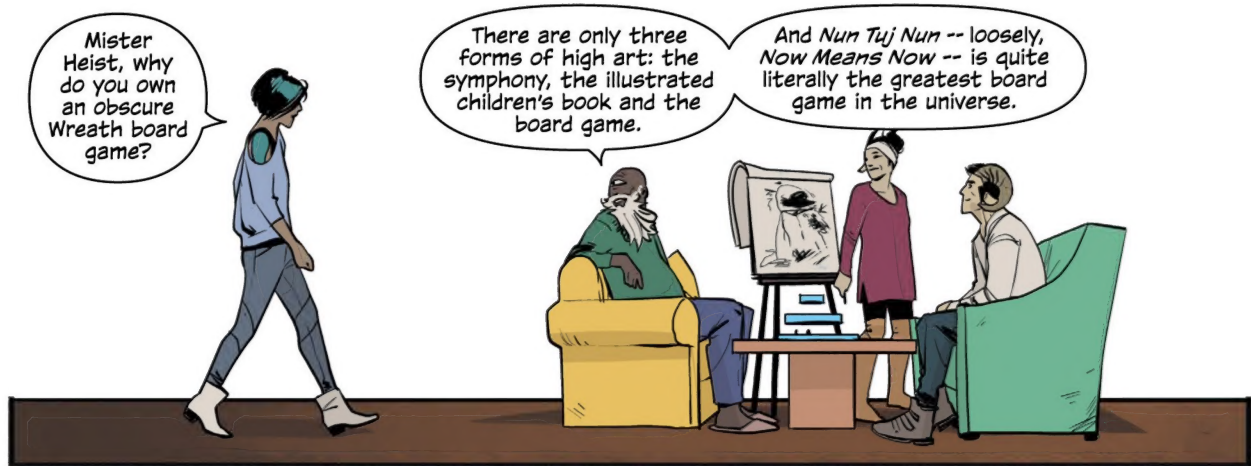








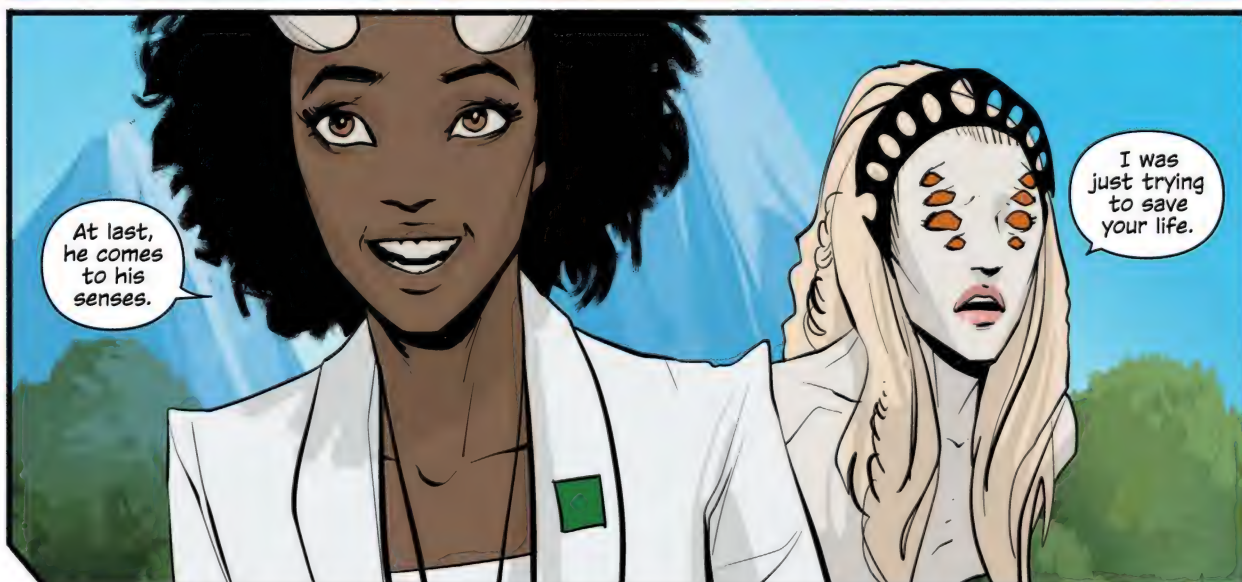








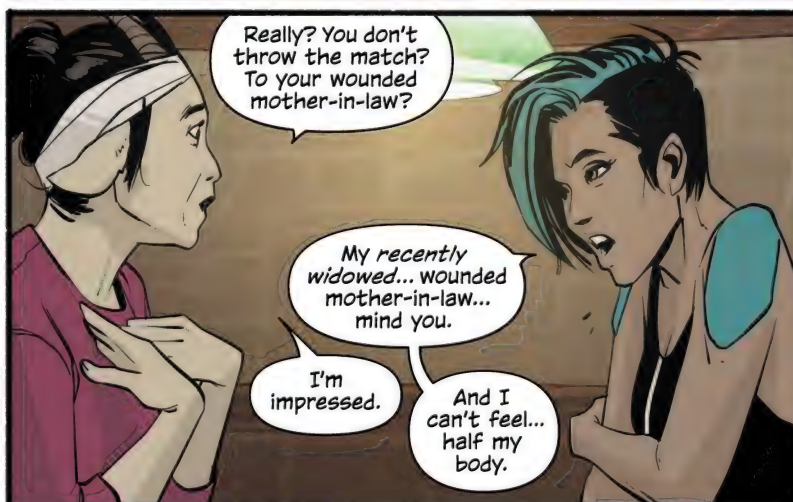
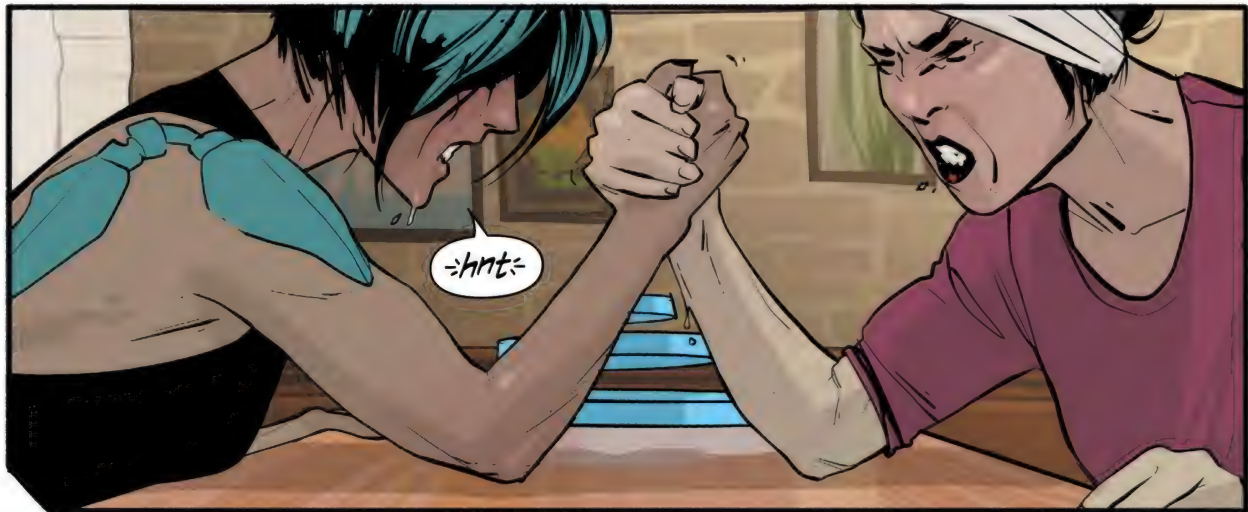




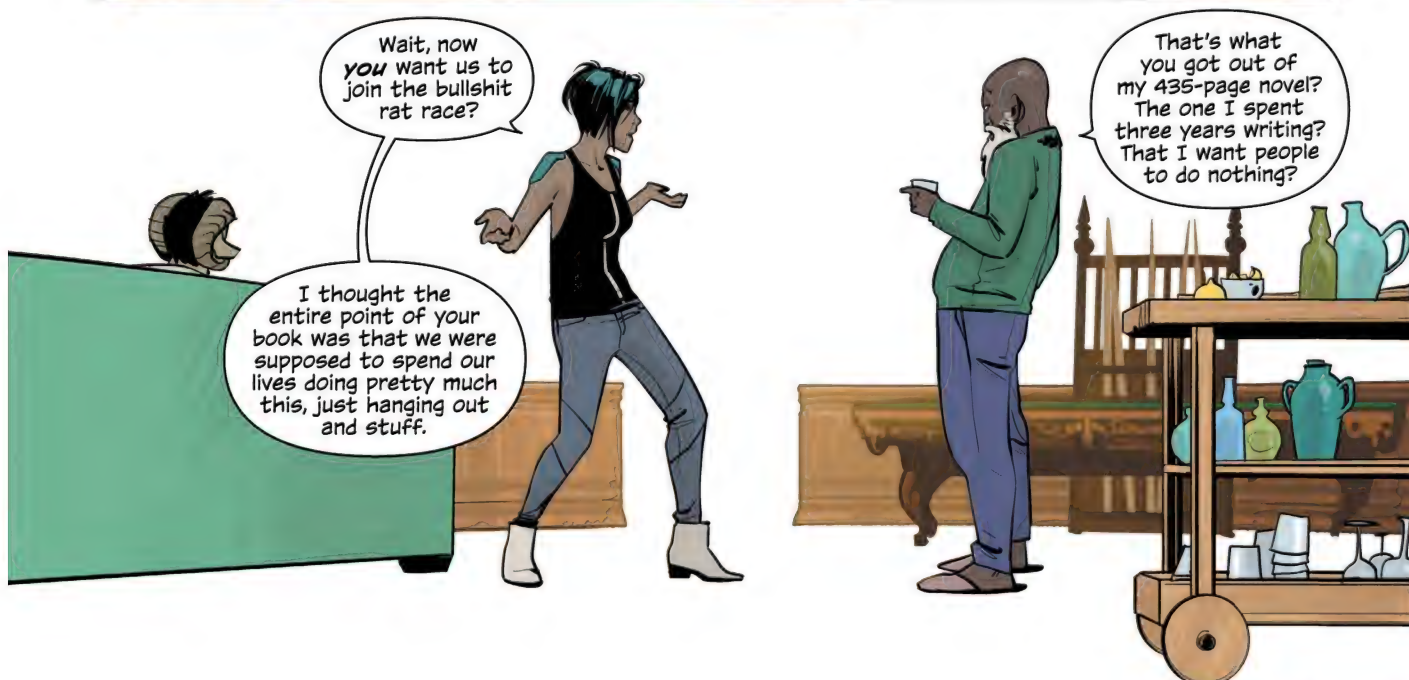
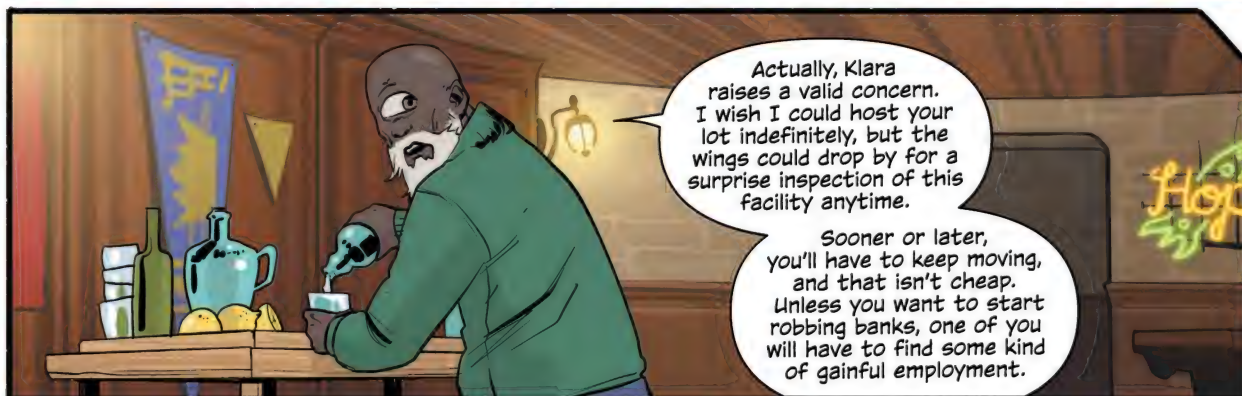




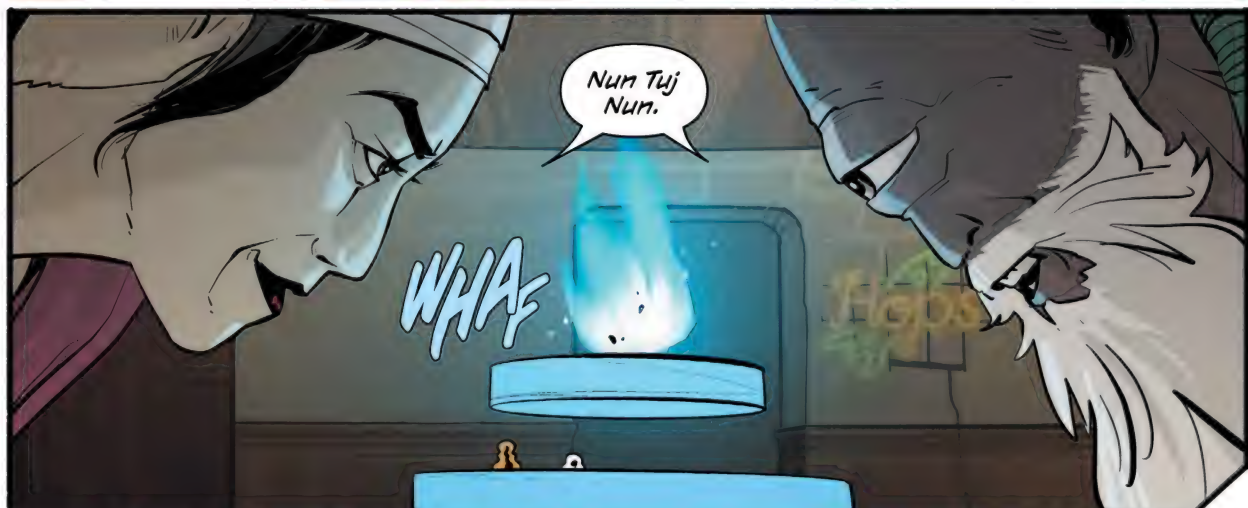




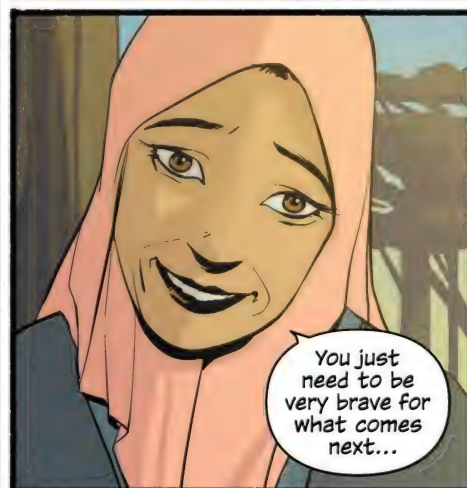
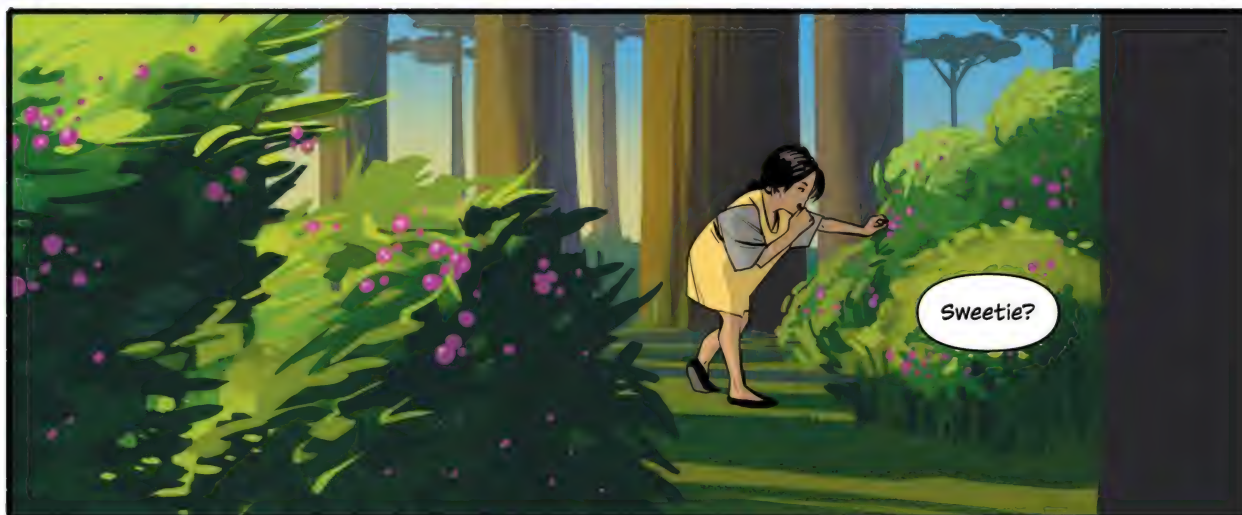
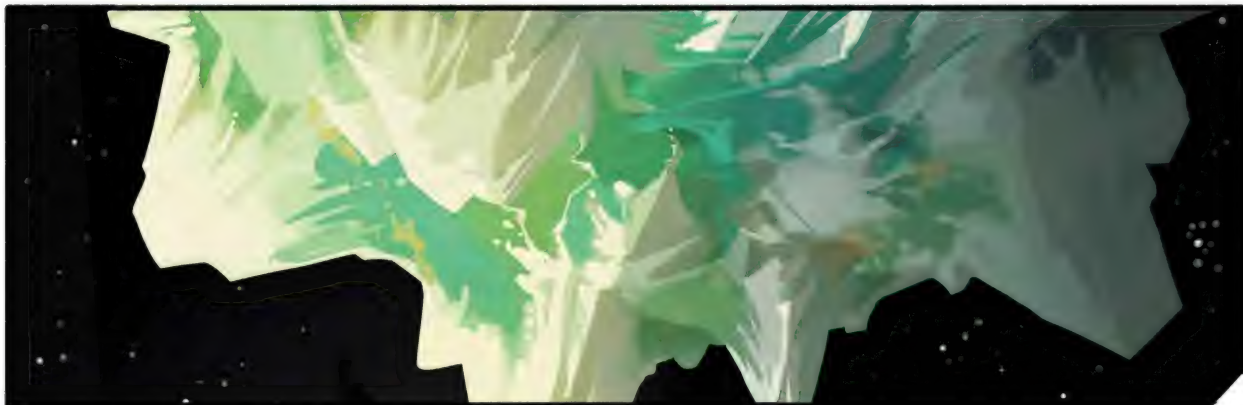








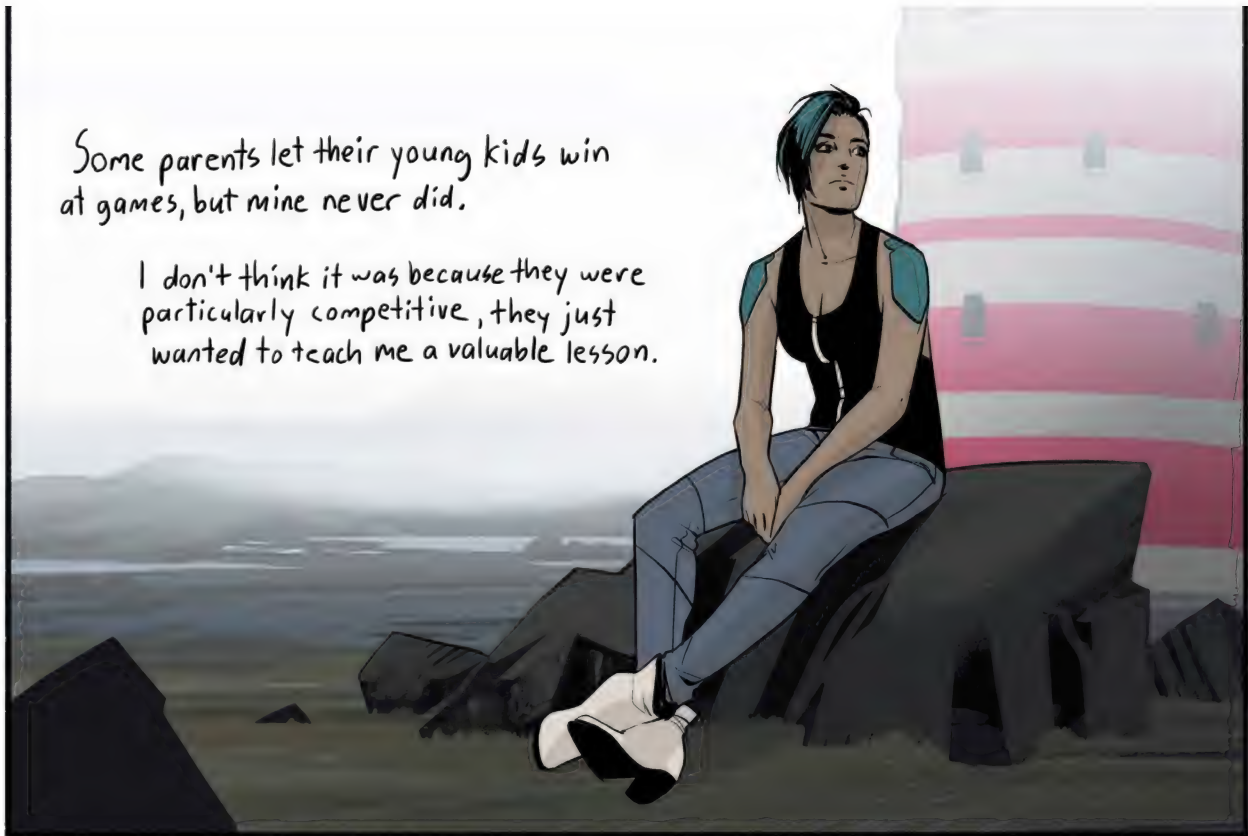






Some parents let their young kids win at games, but mine never did.

I don't think it was because they were particularly competitive, they just wanted to teach me a valuable lesson.



Life is mostly just learning how to lose.

Hey.



Take off your pants.

What? Why?

We haven't been together in weeks. I want to suck your cock.



Something tells me you're once again using sex to avoid discussing an uncomfortable subject.

No, I'm using sex to make you come.

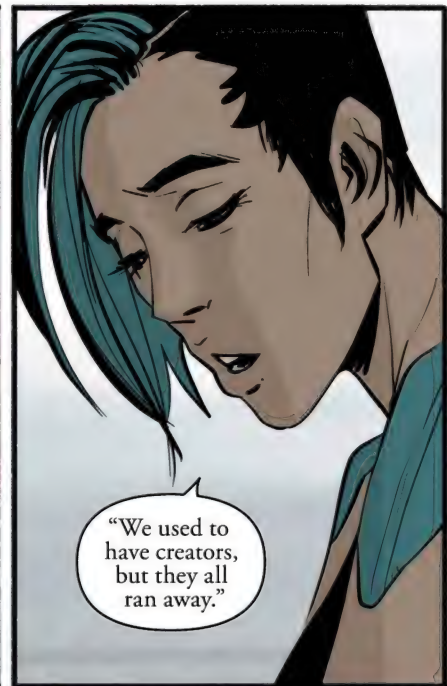
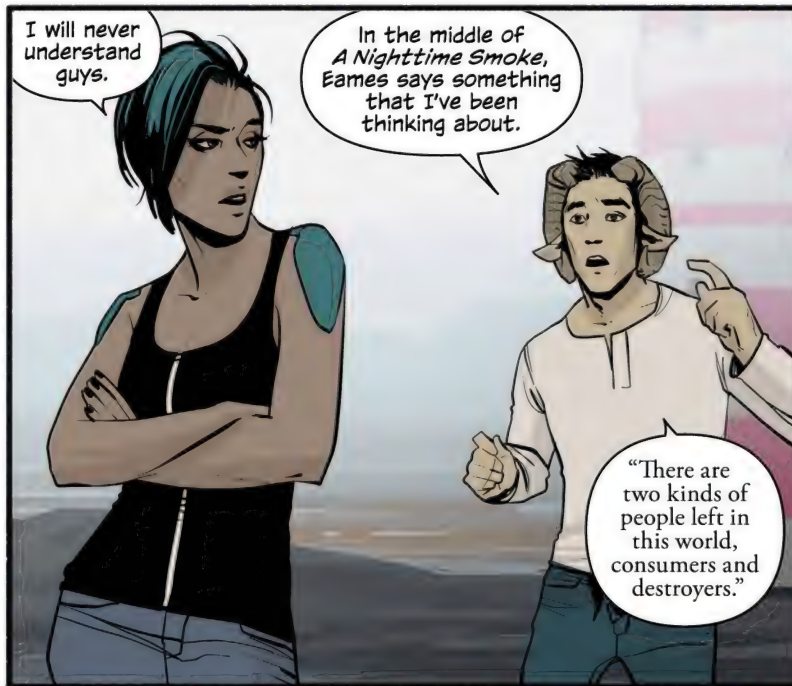
Where do you want to do it? All over my tits? My face?



Do you remember Chapter Fifteen?

























Now  
stand on the  
bad man's neck  
until he stops  
moving.





# TO BE CONTINUED

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Some guys just can't catch a break, huh?

Nice to see everyone again. (I can see you.) Sorry our schedule got shifted by a week, but Chapter Thirteen was a surprise sellout, and we wanted to get some second printings of that issue back on the shelves before we rolled on with Fourteen. As always, your patience is adored.

Before we get to your mail (which can always be sent to that little address right under the *To Be Continued* masthead up there), congratulations are in order for Ms. Fiona Staples, whose industry peers astutely honored her as both Best Artist AND Best Colorist at this year's Harvey Awards.

Saga was also fortunate enough to be named 'Best Graphic Story' at the 2013 Hugo Awards, home of one of the most prestigious/phallic trophies in all of science fiction. I've been reading Hugo winners since I was a kid, so I can't tell you how much it means to me that this story in particular received its very own rocketship. Thanks again to everyone who took the time to recognize our work, and congratulations to all of our fellow nominees, whose comics (especially that *Locke & Key* finale!) you should probably be reading right now instead of my laurel-resting drivel.

While you hunt down some copies, here are a few of your thoughtful missives, as presented by Fonografiks, our unsung letterer, logo and endpaper designer extraordinaire:

Dear Brian,

*What do you use to keep your head shiny? Soap or shampoo?*

*Mike Larson*

*Sebastian, FL*

Excellent question, Mike, and yes, I HAVE been reading a lot of great comics recently.

First up is a new digital comic called *Anti-Hero* by my old pal Jay Faerber and his fantastic collaborator Nate Stockman. "What happens when a superhero's secret identity is compromised by an opportunistic street criminal?" Awesome premise, right? Each chapter is only 99 cents on ComiXology through the good folks at Monkeybrain.

Speaking of ComiXology, I was browsing their recent releases when I stumbled onto one of my favorite new creators, Karl Stevens, a Xeric-winning cartoonist and contributor to *The Boston Phoenix*. Check out any of the gorgeous collections of Karl's hilarious work, maybe the most lavishly illustrated autobiographical (kinda) comics ever.

Somewhat less lavishly illustrated but probably way more honest are the autobio-comics of Julia Wertz, of *Fart Party* and *Drinking at the Movies* infamy. Her newest, *The Infinite Wait and Other Stories* (from the decidedly non-digital Koyama Press) is her best yet. Wertz is the funniest, most original "voice" in comics, so please buy all of her books so she'll

stop spelunking in haunted diaper factories for her new online project and get back to sitting at a crummy drafting table for thirteen hours a day for our amusement.

Those are a few of the many works that help keep my scalp healthy and clean.

Dear BKV & Fiona,

*I wanted to let you know about a passionate sect of Saga fans you may not be familiar with—the inmates of the Stringfellow Correctional Unit in Roshorn, Texas.*

*I've been reading BKV stuff since middle school. A few years back, I sent my brother (who is an inmate there) some trades of Y: The Last Man, but it didn't quite take. Look, these guys have no access to women whatsoever. How can we expect them to get into a non-porno story about a world without men?*

*Anyway, one of my brother's friends is a talented artist, and he and I are collaborating on our own comic book. I sent Saga Vol. 1 as a reference for what I wanted our book to be—clever, economic dialogue, fast story, and clean, vivid art. I didn't think they'd go for it.*

*Little did I know, but Saga is a prison sensation! It's getting passed around like... anything that gets passed around in prison. My brother has loaned his copy to dozens of inmates, and I've gotten rabid requests to send volume two already. They especially like The Will. What a dreamboat.*

*Anyway, do remember that your "incendiary little screed" has touched many men who have been severely relegated to near-endless suffering, punishment, and captivity. You've given them something to discuss, to enjoy, to dream about.*

*Thank you!*

*Ever,*

*David Goldberg*

*Los Angeles, CA*

Wow, thanks to you, your brother and everyone at Stringfellow, David. That's amazing. Any other prison libraries out there interested in copies of *Saga*?

*To Be Continued,*

*Congratulations, Fiona...Marko is officially THE HOTTEST DUDE in comics!*

*I do love 'em sensitive.*

*Sincerely,*

*Chuck McKinney*

*Hell's Kitchen, NYC*

Yeah yeah, *The Will* is hot, Marko is hot, but where's the love for FARD? Pendulously gonadded planet-inseminators need love, too.

Dear Brian and Fiona,



I write to you to tell you how much I've been enjoying your work in Saga. I've been a reader of your work, Brian, since Runaways and have enjoyed to some extent your other books, like Pride of Baghdad. Y: The Last Man, not so much, sorry.

At the moment I've also been reading Ex Machina and I'm really enjoying how the characters interact. They feel real and it makes me care for them. I see the same thing on Saga and I think that's why I enjoy it a lot. Fiona's art also helps, as her work is one of the best I've seen in a long time.

I have one request. I want to become a published writer in the comic medium and I love to read scripts, especially since every creator has a different style. If it were possible to receive a copy of one of your old scripts I would be forever grateful.

I do hope that when I make it I get to meet both of you as I enjoy both your work. Hopefully Saga will continue for a long while and you keep doing great on it.

Keep on with the great work!

Wilfred Esteves

Kenner, LA

Wilfred, I greatly admire the balls of any aspiring writer who opens a request for help by telling the author which of his/her works you really didn't care for.

For your commendable honesty, I'm going to let you download a free copy of *The Making of The Private Eye* from PanelSyndicate.com. My collaborator on that comic (whose fourth all-new, pay-what-you-want installment should be out as we speak), artist Marcos Martin, created an 85-page (!) behind-the-scenes extravaganza that features not just one of my scripts, but also my original story proposal, as well as formerly private emails and sketches. Please enjoy with our compliments.

And while Wilfred has vaguely insulted his way to a freebie, 100% of the profits from this special issue will go directly to Marcos, our gifted colorist Muntsa Vicente and their adorable family, so I hope other interested parties will please consider ponying up at least a little something. It's worth it just to see Marcos' costume designs, I promise.

Dear Brian and Fiona,

First, I'm late to the party. So sorry. I've had Saga sitting here for a while, since the first issue came out. I've been buying them faithfully, and I bought the trades, and, well, I got way behind in my comics reading. Way way behind. But I read them a couple days ago, and wow, they're awesome.

Second, I love the book, story, and art. The art seems so simple, yet it's amazingly evocative. I adore Marko and Alana, and Hazel's narration has such a distinct voice. I like how well rounded the secondary characters are, how each has his or her own voice and are given their own scenes. I also like how the story is unfolding, in a non-linear, yet easy to follow fashion. You guys are really knocking it out of the park with this book and I'm eagerly awaiting the next installment.

Third, I'm thrilled to see a lettercol. Sometimes, the lettercol can be the best part of a book. Back in the '70s, I had the thrill of seeing a handful of my LoCs in print, in DC's Supergirl, Swamp Thing, and Titans, mostly. And it was in an editorial comment in a lettercol that I first learned about comic cons and went on to attend the one mentioned, given it was in Manhattan's long-gone-now Commodore Hotel (now a Hyatt) near Grand Central Station. The con was Phil Seuling's NY

Comic Arts Convention and for a long time it was THE comic con. From that, I learned about publications about comics, like The Comic Reader.

Fourth, something about me. I've been reading comics since I was around 7, which was 53 years ago, so yeah, I'll do the math for you, I recently had my 60th birthday. I started with the usual comics for girls/kids, stuff like Little Lulu, the Funny Pages in the newspapers, Archies and Millie the Model, Classics Illustrated, etc., though I can't recall my first comic, the one that got me excited. I've just always loved graphic storytelling, though I love picture-less books, too. But I started reading superhero comics around the same time, and that just wasn't something girls did, so my friends would shun me in public if I pulled out an issue of Adventure or Action or Batman, or even Lois Lane. But I kept reading, finding more and more comics that interested me. By 1980, I was reading about 30 or so comic titles a month. Then DC killed off the original Supergirl. I never did read the end of Crisis on Infinite Earths and boycotted DC (and that pretty much was all I'd been reading by then) until curiosity drove me back to a comics shop in 1995 and I got started reading them again.

So, that's it. No recipes, sorry.

Rachel Stein

Flushing, NY

A true lettercol veteran! Welcome to the family, Rachel.

Saga Team,

I wanted to let you know how important the stories of Marko, Alana, The Will, et al. have become to me over the past few months. I recently got back into reading comics and the two Saga trades were some of the first things I picked up. I fell in love with Alana and Marko instantly. I married the woman of my dreams two months before picking up the trades and the blending of a fantastic setting with a very real look at what it means to start a family struck a chord with me. I eagerly began awaiting the release of Saga #13, wondering what might be next for my favorite intergalactic family.

A few weeks later my parents told me they did not want a relationship with me. They said a lot about the character of my wife, and how she was turning me against them. It has been a hard time, but in my heart I am at peace with who I am and my choice to marry the most beautiful, caring, funny, intelligent, and brave person in the world (no offense to anyone on the Saga Team or the readers; I am sure you are all wonderful people who deserve every ounce of happiness).

I returned to my Saga trades a few days after my falling out with my parents with new eyes and took strength from them. The story you are telling is important for so many reasons, but I wanted to thank you specifically for being brave enough to tell a real love story. Not something dressed up and perfect where you know everything will work out and characters fall into neat little boxes with their appropriate tropes labeled in square lettering, but a real story where people are messy, wild bundles of personal history and culture that become something more because of love. And that love is not without cost or sacrifice but it is so clearly worth it. I never thought I would be in a situation where my marriage would not be respected or accepted by my family, or where my family would leave me because of who I love, but I stand resolute next to my wife and will never apologize for that.



*So thank you for your bravery and lending your talents to this story. It helped me through a dark place and I am sure it will help many others for years to come.*

*Travis R.*

*Winter Park, FL*

That's insane about your parents, Travis. I'm really sorry for what you and your wife have been going through, and I'm grateful if our series is some small solace.

But goddamn, Hamburger K. Vaughan, the mailbag has been getting supremely dark of recent. Dig us out another bald joke or someone inviting Fiona to prom, would you? Something with a lot of exclamation points, maybe...

*Dear Saga Team,*

*First off I am pretty new to the comic game and Saga was the first monthly book I got into! MAN is it amazing! Saga was my gateway drug into the comic world and in fact I actually got my wife into it, she loves it as well!!! Only comic book she reads and we both fight on Wednesday to read it first, in fact we started getting two books! Where do we start, the story is amazing and the art by Fiona Staples is breathtaking!*

*Saga will always have a special place in our heart because of our daughter. We were struggling with names when we first discovered Saga, after reading the first issue we had a name for our soon to be little one! Your book inspired us to name our daughter Hazel Isabel, who was born July 13th this summer!! I know it's crazy but as two new parents the panel of Marko saying, "No, but you and I have survived worse scrapes together. And this time, we have something else on our side. We have hope." After the next panel saying "My name is Hazel", sealed the deal because she is our hope. So thank you so much for the inspiration for the name and I mean why not Izabel she's freaking awesome in your book! We did tinker with that name a little bit!*

*So thanks for getting me hooked into the world of comics, I mean because of your work I had to instantly read the entire series of Y: The Last Man and Runaways! Saga is an amazing universe that I love getting swept away in and again you were a great inspiration for our daughter's name!*

*Paul, Amanda and Hazel*

*Milwaukee, WI*

FUCK YES. Now we're talking. Screw your life-sized tattoos of Lying Cat, if you people really want to pledge allegiance to this title, you'll follow Paul and Amanda's sterling example and curse your firstborn with the weird name of one of our characters.

Seriously, thank you so much for looking to our book for naming inspiration, and we hope our Hazel will always be a worthy bearer of your daughter's lovely handle. If not, just say that you named her after the rabbit from Watership Down.

*BKV & FS –*

*For my buddy Tony (the Bert to my Ernie) and me, there was nothing better than Saga Day in San Diego. Not donut day. Not food truck Tuesday. Not even pay day. The night before, we would giggle excitedly, re-reading from issue one, eating California burritos while being careful not to get any salsa on the pages. We would put cookies and milk out for the UPS guy, insuring safe delivery of the next chapter. On Saga Day, Tony*

*would pick me up early. We would drive to Villainous Lair and wait patiently for the door to be unlocked. We would grab our copies of Saga and whatever other books came out that day (thank you for always striving to be on-time—we don't mind the hiatus every 6 months. Really, we don't.) and wait for their ancient POS to fire up. I would start to read my copy in the car, snickering and gasping at the appropriate moments. On Saga Day, we were always late for work. We would man our desks with hunched poses, our copies strategically buried under "important papers." But what could be more important than whether or not that damned planet-egg was indeed hatching, or whether the Lying Cat was mortally affected by the ravages of outer space? On Saga Day, we learned to be careful when we opened up the new issue, lest the first page be a splash of a historically intimate moment between Alana & Marko. Or Prince Robot IV's male-functioning monitor screen. Or some other NSFW creature/event. (And on Saga Day, we reveled in the fact that there are writers and artists out there who are not afraid of being lovingly demented.) At the end of Saga Day, we would collapse contentedly into our respective beds, girlfriends and fiancées rolling their eyes, clueless as to fantasies involving something called "The Stalk."*

*Sadly, issue #12 marked the end of Saga Day as we know it. Tony hasn't died (I'll leave the tearjerker endings to you), but Veronica (said fiancée) and I were lucky enough to find jobs in Milwaukee, a city we've both been fond of since we were born here many years ago. Tony and I made one last run to Villainous Lair and Komikaze, and I closed out my pull lists. We had one last California burrito, and one last beer under the setting San Diego sun. I packed up my comic books and entrusted them to the moving company. I felt the tug of adulthood—I knew that leaving San Diego meant a more secure foundation for a young family. I thought about Marko & Alana, and the journey that they were on for their family. Sure, we weren't being chased by two warring planets or an assortment of horrifying bounty hunters. But our last surviving grandparent is getting old and we do have two terrifying Lying Cats (and hopefully have a Hazel of our own to protect, one day).*

*Thank you for creating a world that is so familiar and so foreign, a place where Tony & I can escape to that always makes us feel good about being alive when we close the back cover. Thank you for bringing friends together in a way that only lovingly demented storytellers can. We're thousands of miles apart now, but you can bet your alligator butlers that we'll call each other each and every Saga Day, until the very end.*

*Can't wait,*

*Rob Novak*

*Shorewood, WI*

*P.S. Set up a pull list @ a great Milwaukee shop—Lost World of Wonders! Since we're saving for a wedding/house/adulthood, I only chose two titles. One of them was Saga. The other? I'll never tell...*

• **TYPIST'S NOTE** – This guy was a playwriting student of mine at UCSD.

Wait, Typist's note? Who the hell is Typist?

For those of you wondering which unlucky Assistant Intern Slave I force to type up the handwritten letters that Hamburger



selects from the mailbag each month, that would actually be none other than award-winning playwright and educator Ruth McKee, who also happens to be my beleaguered wife.

Ruth has been patiently abetting my harebrained schemes ever since she hand-lettered one of my first independent comics back when we were in school together. I'm sure transcribing her idiot husband's fawning correspondence while our two kids scream for their absentee Hollywood dad is not Ruth's ideal way to spend a Tuesday night, but she always offers to do it anyway, without ever complaining, because she is made of love and moxie and caffeine. Thank you, Ruthless.

And happy trails to you on your Milwaukee adventure, Rob. I hope some of Ms. McKee's life lessons come in handy along the way.

*BKV & Fiona,*

*I'm writing in to claim a prize that wasn't offered, that of farthest-flung Saga reader. Currently, I call the tiny village of Ambohitolomahitsy (pronounced just like it's spelled) in the highlands of central Madagascar, my home (I'll put a map on the back.) It takes quite some time for mail to reach here and I just got my birthday present from my brother, The Giant. He went over to Chapel Hill Comics (shout out Chapel Hill Comics) and picked up the first eleven issues of Saga for me. I read a few before I moved here, but I was overjoyed to get updated.*

*I passed them around to some other folks in the Peace Corps and they are very popular. I teach English here and*

*have used them to teach some of my more advanced students. The text is a little beyond where they are at but they love the art.*

*Anyway, I know I'm behind whatever the current issue is but I'm excited for another package so I can get sort of caught up. It's awesome and I'm really enjoying it. A small slice of my former life in God's America. Keep up the good work.*

*Walker Thomas*

*Ambohitolomahitsy, Madagascar*

Whoa, can anyone out there beat Ambohitolomahitsy in terms of sheer remoteness?

Until some Saga-reading cosmonaut or Arctic research scientist steps forwards to steal the crown, you're our first big winner of the contest you just invented, Walker. And as thanks for your service to the Corps, we'll attempt to mail you a thingummy or two from the Almighty Prize Drawer, including a signed copy of this very issue, an official map of the CBS Radford Lot, my 2013 Wondercon Onstage pass, and a pooping moose keychain that a reader was nice enough to send us last year. I can't guarantee that everything will find its way to you, but it's worth a shot, right?

Anyway, lazy Fiona only had to draw about seventeen different characters in this issue, so let's introduce at least one more major new player next chapter, as Prince Robot IV finally... well, you should probably just see for yourself.

Back to work,

Brian



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STUART MOORE  
GUS STORMS

image

1

# EGOs

EARTH • GALACTIC • OPERATIVES  
**SPECIAL PREVIEW**

*"EGOs sets up house  
at the junction of  
superhero stories  
and big-ideas sci-fi  
—then trashes the  
junction and builds  
its own huge, insane  
theme park."*

-Mike Carey

**ON SALE**  
**JANUARY 15, 2014**

THE  
FUTURE  
ISN'T  
FOREVER

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PROLOGUE

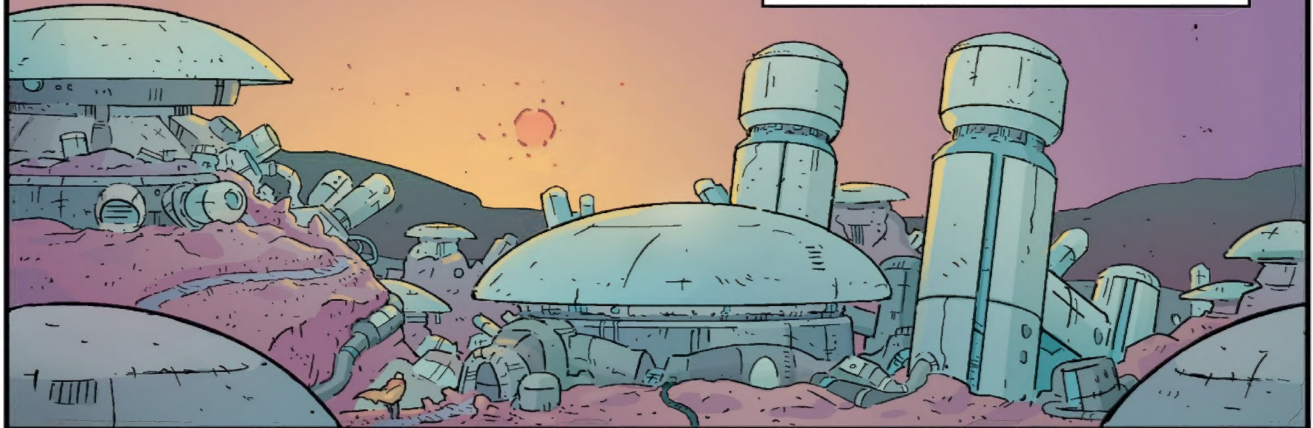
SOME PEOPLE JUST COME  
WITH EXPIRATION DATES.

SOME PLANETS, TOO.

16 CYGNI B-B  
WAS BASICALLY A  
GIANT MISTAKE.

IN LESS THAN A CENTURY, THE COLONY  
POPULATION HAD STRIPPED THE SOIL OF ALL  
ITS MEAGER RESOURCES. AFTER THAT, YOU  
COULDN'T EVEN GROW A CACTUS IN A BATHTUB.

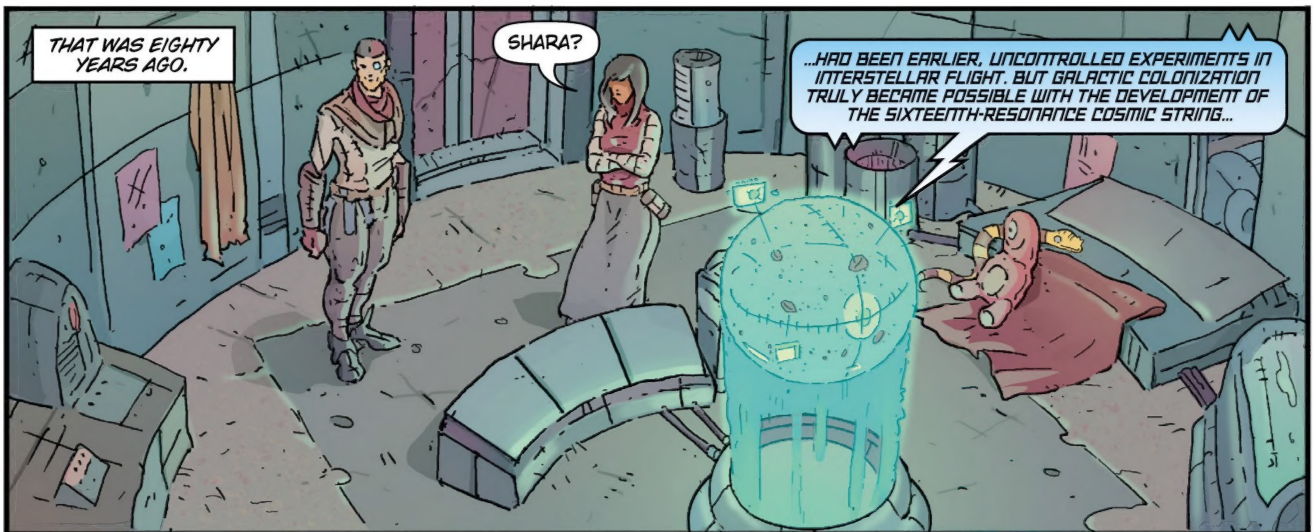
EARTHGOV EVAC'D ALL THE COLONISTS WHO  
WOULD LEAVE, AND SHIPPED EMERGENCY POPUP  
SHELTERS TO THE REST. FULLY AUTONOMOUS,  
SELF-POWERED AND 100% RESOURCE RECYCLING,  
DESIGNED TO LAST THREE DECADES.



THAT WAS EIGHTY  
YEARS AGO.

SHARA?

...HAD BEEN EARLIER, UNCONTROLLED EXPERIMENTS IN  
INTERSTELLAR FLIGHT. BUT GALACTIC COLONIZATION  
TRULY BECAME POSSIBLE WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
THE SIXTEENTH-RESONANCE COSMIC STRING...



...THIS PHENOMENON EFFECTIVELY LOWERS  
THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE CONTINUUM  
WE KNOW AND A NEIGHBORING UNIVERSE,  
WHOSE LIMITING VELOCITY IS MUCH FASTER  
THAN THE SPEED OF LIGHT...

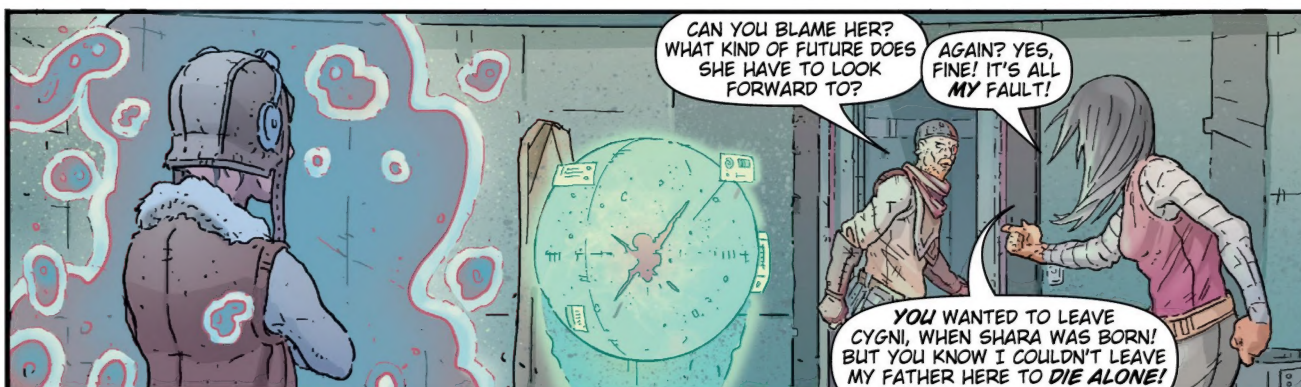
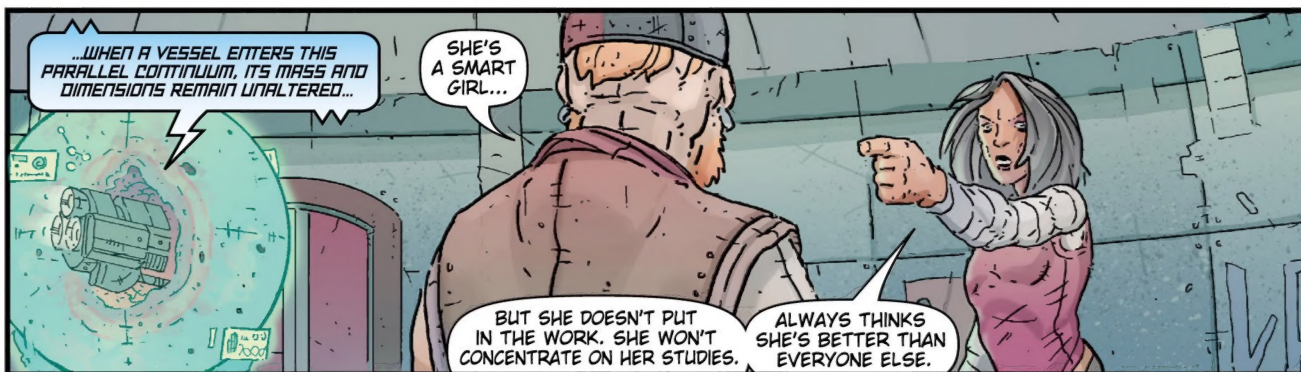
HOW  
DOES SHE  
DO THAT?



HOW DOES  
SHE **DISAPPEAR**  
ALL THE TIME?









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